HOISTAH AN INDIAN GIRL

Edited By
E. M. HARRETT

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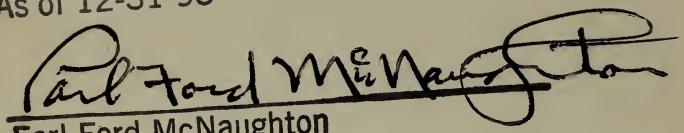

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HOISTAH

AN INDIAN GIRL

A Cheyenne Baby

HOISTAH

AN INDIAN GIRL

BY

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"GERONIMO'S STORY OF HIS LIFE,"
"MOCCO, AN INDIAN BOY," ETC.

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AN INDIAN GIRL

HOISTAH

CHAPTER I

A Winter's Camp

More than a hundred years ago a band of Cheyenne Indians once made a winter's camp on the bank of the river which still bears their tribal name. They chose a beautiful spot near the Black Hills, where the woods were abundant and deer and elk would soon be driven in by winter storms.

The camp consisted of some seventy tepees made of buffalo hides stretched over poles. Each tepee was the home of a family, and the whole camp formed a circle, with an opening through which the first rays of the morning sun could come and awaken these primitive people.

The rolling, flat-topped mountains called the Black Hills were back from the river. Their western slopes were covered with dark green pines and their valleys sparsely carpeted with coarse grass. Some of the hills were of lighter coloured rocks and soil, among which, here and there, hills of sombre black arose, or great, blackened rocks stood up like sentinels above the canyons and yellow sandstone cliffs.

The tepees were well stored with warm blankets and buffalo robes, and plenty of buffalo meat hung drying in the autumn sun.

When this camp was all arranged and everything well in order, the chief, young Iron Shirt, called a council of his warriors. The former chief, Wolf Robe, had but recently lost his life in a battle with a band of Sioux Indians. The chief and several of

his followers had already fallen, and the timely arrival of Iron Shirt and a band of the young warriors saved the day for the band. But the results of the battle after all were bad enough, for besides the loss of their old chief the Cheyennes lost several of their most trusty warriors. It was to consider what should be done about this matter that the council had been called.

When the council arose from its session Iron Shirt gave quick commands, and in a few hours the warrior band, in full war paint, rode away to avenge the blood of their kinsmen and punish their mortal enemies, the Sioux.

Only the old and infirm, or the inferior warriors, were left to guard the camp and protect the women and children.

Every day the herd boys drove the ponies far out to some river-valley meadow where

the grass was still good, and while the herd grazed the boys played at war or hunted wild turkeys and other small game.

At night the ponies were driven in near the camp, so that the warriors on guard duty might protect them from any roving bands of Crow or Sioux Indians that might try to steal them.

To keep the ponies from straying, the boys each time would hobble a number of them, usually those which had been ridden that day. The rawhide thong, used to tie the pony's feet in hobbling him, served also as a bridle to ride him with. This primitive bridle was made by fastening one end of the rawhide around the pony's lower jaw and using the remainder as a single rein. All Cheyenne boys were expert horsemen.

The women of the tribe were busy too, dressing the skins of deer and buffaloes, pre-

paring the buckskin and leather needed for clothes or tents. Some of the women made garments for winter wear—shirts, dresses and moccasins. Besides they had the corn to gather and the meat to dry. No one was idle—even the smaller children were busy at their play.

Thus several weeks passed in the lonely camp, and still there were no signs of the return of the Cheyenne warriors.

According to the old people of the tribe everything indicated a hard winter. The berries had borne plentifully, the leaves in the forest were thick, and the fur on all the wild creatures of the chase was unusually heavy. Indeed even the falling of the pine cones on the hillsides indicated, to the Cheyennes, an unlucky winter. Worst of all, old White Eagle, the medicine man, had prophesied disasters.

At last the coming winter and its rapid approach became the chief topic of conversation throughout the camp, especially in its probable effect upon the absent warriors.

One day an ominous ring was visible around the sun, the air was hazy and moisture-laden and the east wind seemed more than chilly as it sighed through the boughs of the scattered trees in the camp. Old White Eagle said, "The snows are coming," and the women and children said, "Why do the warriors stay so long? Has evil befallen them?"

That night the herd boys came with the ponies of the tribe earlier than usual, and, driving them into a narrow, sheltered valley, entered the camp, hungry, of course, but glad to be near the fires in the tepees.

The camp soldiers drew blankets close

about them as, in the gathering gloom, they silently mounted guard to protect the helpless sleeping ones. Women talked together in little groups here and there. Iron Shirt's young wife, Meneah (Doll Woman), was alone in her tepee, tenderly caring for a new born babe, the newly awakened mother's instincts strangely surging through her soul as she thought of the joys and responsibilities now placed upon her.

Suddenly a cry "Hoist!" "Hoist!" (Signal lights! Signal lights!) rang through the camp, and a hundred glad voices answered and took it up: "Hoist!" "Hoist!" Distinct but far away, far to the east, four lights had risen, and gone out and reappeared again and again. They were the signals of the victorious warriors returning home, and the whole village—all except

Meneah and her tiny babe—joined in building the answering signal lights. When the women, with hearts brim full of joy, went to Iron Shirt's tepee they saw for the first time the little one and Meneah called her (Signal-Light Girl) Hoistah.

CHAPTER II

Other Camps

In the early dawn of the next day the returning Cheyenne warriors, after having travelled all night through falling snow, reached their camp and told of the glorious victory they had won over the hated Sioux. Chief Iron Shirt was glad to know that his safe return from his first victory was to be commemorated in the name of his first-born child.

The severe winter weather, beginning early in the fall, continued unabated until late in the spring. Thus far the signs noted by the Cheyennes seemed to have been rightly interpreted, and the prophecies of old White Eagle likely to be fulfilled, though no disasters had come yet.

In the spring the Cheyennes moved down the river among the green meadows, seeking pasture for their ponies and following the deer, elk and buffaloes as they left the shelter of the wooded hills. Protection being no longer needed, the animals entered the open country in the river valleys where the first tender grass springs up, and the warriors sought them there.

Hoistah, in her Cheyenne cradle, hung at her mother's back and perhaps wondered what all these changes meant. By the next autumn, when the tribe had come again into winter camp in the Black Hills, she was learning to walk, and all day long would toddle about among the tepees. By the next spring and summer she was gathering wild flowers and could play upon the green with the other little Cheyenne children.

So passed four summers, and again the winter camp was made on the bank of the Cheyenne River.

The Cheyennes as usual had come into the Black Hills before it was time for the game to be driven in to seek shelter, but no big game came, indeed it seemed that the big game, elk and buffaloes, would never come. Repeatedly hunting parties had returned to camp to report only ill luck.

One band of hunters, going far down the river, came back with the report that the Crow Indians were encroaching upon the Cheyenne hunting grounds. Whether other Indians were driving the animals away or whether the mild winter weather induced them to remain longer in the open country was an unsettled question in the camp.

Iron Shirt had about decided to organise a large hunting party and go down the river,

with the intention of finding the game or else driving from the hunting grounds of his people any Crow or other Indians whom he might find. A council had been called for the next day to discuss the situation. All the old hunters had decided that only small game could be found in the vicinity of the winter camp, and as the supply of dried meat was insufficient for the winter, some means must be provided for securing larger game.

The next day a little Cheyenne boy, Running Wolf, son of sub-chief Yellow Hawk, reported that a large number of wild goats were feeding in a valley about two miles below the camp. Immediately a hunting party was formed and moved out to drive the goats into the river at a bend a mile below the camp where a high bank on the opposite shore would make it possible to

prevent escape. In a few hours the skilful hunters had the whole herd in this death trap, and were killing them at leisure, when a party of white men approached.

An Indian woman and her French husband, who were with the white men, acted as interpreters. Through this couple the strangers said they were on a peaceful mission from the great chief of the pale-faces. They had come at his bidding to visit his red children of the western forest. They promised that on the morrow they would visit Iron Shirt's camp and deliver a message from their chief at Washington.

The hunters then invited their guests to help themselves to game. The white men killed a dozen or more wild goats and with this supply of meat departed.

Hoistah, seated on her mother's pony, had seen the white men, and became quite

anxious to know more of them. As her mother could not answer all her questions she decided to ask little Running Wolf, whom she thought a very wise person. She must not bother her father with questions, of course.

At evening she sought the now famous young hunter, Running Wolf, and asked him of the white men, but he could tell little of them except that they had with them a very strange creature—a *black man* who was as large and strong as a grizzly bear.

Early next morning the Cheyenne camp was astir, for the guests must be received in proper form. Under the direction of the chief a council lodge was made of twenty buffalo hides stretched over poles arranged in a huge circle with an opening to the eastward.

Meneah placed Iron Shirt's war bonnet,

spear, bow and arrows, war clubs, and new moccasins in the sunlight, where they lay for an hour or more before the chief called for them. Hoistah followed her everywhere. Next Meneah brought out Iron Shirt's three favourite stone pipes, a pouch of tobacco, and a beautiful blanket and placed these also in the morning sun, to serve at the council.

Young, fat puppies were killed and prepared, to make a delicate feast for the distinguished visitors, and all the Cheyennes awaited the coming of their guests.

About mid-morning the expected guests arrived and among them Captain Clark, for it was none other than the famous explorer. The captain was received into the council lodge and seated on a buffalo robe by the side of Chief Iron Shirt, who, in war bonnet and all his fine feathered and beaded

ornamental dress, welcomed the distinguished messenger from the great father. After they too were seated the warriors of Iron shirt and the followers of Captain Clark were invited to sit within the circle of the council lodge. Then the lodge was closed. A richly coloured blanket was placed over the shoulders of the two chieftains and the peace pipe was smoked. After this Captain Clark, upon the invitation of Chief Iron Shirt, arose and spoke as follows:

"The great chief of the white men, Thomas Jefferson, your white father, sends greetings to you, and advises that you visit him and that all the Cheyennes and other Indians of the west cease from killing each other and live at peace."

The Indian woman and her French husband interpreted what was said. Slowly

and with great dignity Iron Shirt arose and answered:

"We welcome you. You give good advice, but it is hard to follow. If we went to see this great white father in his camp in the land of the rising sun, our enemies, the Crow and Sioux Indians, would steal our ponies and kill our women and children. But if all the other Indians will live at peace it will suit the Cheyennes. Is that not so, my braves?" And a chorus answered, "It is so."

Again the Indian woman and her French husband interpreted. Then presents were given. After this the white men, declining to partake of the feast, left the Cheyenne camp.

Among those who did not enter the council lodge were the women and children

of the Cheyennes, and the black man, York, who was Captain Clark's servant.

York wandered about the camp aimlessly, and everywhere he went Hoistah and a troop of other small children followed, though if he chanced to turn back suddenly they all fled in terror. York, perceiving this, frequently made abrupt changes in his course, until once, when he turned about suddenly, little Running Wolf, with bow in hand and arrow tightly drawn, faced him. The negro grinned good-naturedly at the determined little warrior, but thereafter he looked back before he turned lest a boyish arrow should destroy an eye for him.

CHAPTER III

The Disaster

Thanks to the visit from Captain Clark and his party, a new interest awoke in the minds of the Cheyennes. They began to think and to talk of the great outside world and of the lands and people far away.

Old White Eagle, however, could see no good in this new people. This wonderland of the east was, to him, a menace. The visit from the pale-faces seemed to him the beginning of the disaster that, according to his prophecies, for four years had threatened his people. "It is all wrong," said he. "I shall not live to see it, but disaster is near us."

Hoistah, as she brought corn for her

mother to pound in the stone mortar, or as she watched the other women melt the finely pulverised glass and thus make beautifully coloured beads, heard them talking, talking, talking of the pretty things the white people wore.

The dress of the Cheyenne woman at this time consisted of two pieces of coarse leather or perhaps buckskin, front and back, sewed together with rawhide thongs and reaching to the knees. The dresses, of course, had arm-holes, and some of them were decorated with rude pictures or tribal symbols burnt into the leather. These front and back pieces could in cold weather be laced together over the shoulders, but in mild weather they hung down over the belt which held the garment to the body at the waist. Every Cheyenne woman as she thought of the strange people and their fine clothes

wondered if she could ever have a dress made of beautiful cloth.

Over the plain dresses, the Cheyenne women wore bright blankets or shawls. Necklaces of bear's claws strung on leather strings were abundant. Hoistah had a necklace made of wolf's claws strung in a similar manner.

Elk teeth were also used for decorations, and one of Hoistah's dresses, a soft doeskin fabric, was decorated with these. Her moccasins were ornamented with glass beads and beautifully coloured, flattened quills of the porcupine, laced or fastened into the buckskin so as to form pretty designs. Her belt was covered with pretty glass beads, and she had a bodice of large, long beads made from the thigh-bones of deer. But one evening as she followed her mother to gather sticks for the tepee fire she said, "I

wish I could ever have a pretty cloth dress." Meneah answered, "Perhaps you may, but I do not know how we can get it."

Not only the women and children were filled with longings for new and strange things but the warriors longed for polished guns such as Captain Clark's men had, for beverages such as the French traders sometimes gave them, and for soft clothing and "strong moccasins" such as white men wore.

While these primitive people were yet busy with preparation for winter the snows came. Old White Eagle passed away one stormy night, and then the Cheyennes said, "This is the disaster that for four years has threatened us."

On a lonely hill they erected his burial scaffold the next day, and, wrapping his best blanket about him, placed his body

there. Beside the scaffold were placed his sacred implements—the great fire spoon, used to carry the sacred fire at the sun dance; the world-shield, used in the sacred games; his medicine mortar and his cup in which he measured medicines; an elk horn spoon, an elk horn scraper and his war club. In his hands were placed his medicine bag, spear, and bow and arrows. Near him were placed provisions for his long journey. His favourite pony too was killed and left by his master. Then because White Eagle had always been wise as well as good and kind, and because it was a custom of the tribe, everybody brought some present and left it by his burial place. First his relatives brought all they had to him as a sacrifice; next the other people brought whatever they chose to bring. It was a funeral befitting the rank and dignity of the aged

Cheyenne. That night another snow storm covered over deeply the dead bodies of chief and pony and all that his relatives and friends had left for him.

CHAPTER IV

Legends

The snows that followed the burial of the old medicine man remained unmelted for weeks and weeks. The days became shorter and the evenings longer. This was the season for telling stories around a good warm fire.

One night Hoistah was permitted to accompany her mother to the tepee of her grandmother, Little Woman, who would tell some of the legends of her people to several of the younger women gathered around her. As they passed around the outer camp circle on their way Hoistah noticed the beautiful northern lights playing just above the horizon, always pale

white but of fantastic form. When at last all the guests assembled in the tepee and were comfortably seated, the company would then listen without comment or question to the monotonous tones of the feeble, wrinkled, old grandmother, as she told the legend of

THE WICKED OLD WOMAN.

Long, long ago a little girl and her baby brother wandered one day far into a dense forest. They had been told not to go into this forest, but they yielded to curiosity and did what their parents told them not to do.

When they were tired of walking so far they found berries to eat and water to drink and slept upon the grass for a long time. Then they started home, but soon lost their way and knew they were lost. On and on they went among strange hills and streams of bitter water. The sun went down, but

the moon was shining and they went on and on.

At last the moon too went down and the little boy was so tired he could walk no farther. His sister tried to carry him, but he was heavy for her; she was too tired.

Presently they saw a light and going up near to it found a lone tepee in which a withered, wicked, old woman lived.

The little girl realised at once, for she had heard the tale, that this was the wicked old woman of the lonely forests, but now the children knew the old woman had seen them and they had no chance of escape, and so they went boldly in. The little girl said, "Grandmother, I have come to be your little helper. I can bring your water and wood and my little brother will soon be big enough to kill game for you to eat." Surprised be-

yond measure the old woman bade them come in and lie down to sleep.

The little girl closed her eyes, but she did not sleep. Her little brother, however, slept soundly, for he was so tired.

Soon the old woman arose from the fire and came over near to the children. She had a sharp knife in her hand and her look was evil. The little girl sat up and said calmly, "Grandmother, you are not wise to eat us, for then there will be no one to help you." Surprised more than ever at the watchfulness and wisdom of this child the wicked woman decided to let both children live, at least until morning.

Next morning she sent the children to bring wood for her, which they did. Then she sent them to the nearby lake for water, but when it was brought she threw it away as unfit to use and sent them back again.

This she did three times, and said, "If you cannot bring me good water you will at least serve as a good meal."

Greatly troubled the children went again to the lake and were starting back with more water when a porcupine came to them and said, "Go in where the moss is thick and fill the basket there. She will like that. Then follow my advice carefully and I will deliver you from this terrible old woman." The children did as the porcupine told them and sure enough the old woman took the water, though she looked perplexed about it, or something. All day she sat in silence, not even answering the questions the children asked, nor eating any food.

At evening the children were playing in the moonlight when she called them, and they started to the tepee, afraid to disobey her. At that moment the porcupine ap-

peared suddenly before the children, and said, "Take these quills and set them up in the path." The children obeyed quickly, and as they did so peeped in and saw that the old woman had removed her moccasins.

Soon the call came again from the tepee and the children answered, "We are coming, grandmother." But following the porcupine they ran away down the path as noiselessly as they could.

Soon the voice of the wicked old woman in wrathful tones said, "I'll teach you to loiter when I call," and she sprang out of the tepee and ran down the path after them, but she soon stopped to take the sharp quills out of the soles of her feet.

On and on ran the porcupine and the children followed. Presently they came to a river, over which, reaching from bank to bank, a great tree trunk had fallen. When

the children were safely across this bridge the porcupine said, "Go on toward that bright yellow star and you will find your home. I shall guard this foot-log. And do not come again into this forest of the evil old woman."

When her little brother could run no longer the girl carried him, almost fainting though she was from fright and fatigue, but at last they saw the campfire of their home and ran on eagerly, glad to be safely out of the way of the evil designs of the Wicked Old Woman.

CHAPTER VI

Legends (*Continued*)

Little Woman ceased and Meneah arose and brought some more fire-wood from outside the tepee. As she re-entered Hoistah's dog came in, placed his head beneath his little mistress' hand, and watched the blaze leap up to consume the sticks as Meneah threw them upon the fire. When all were quiet again Little Woman in measured tones began to speak. This time the story she told was called

THE LEGENDS OF THE CHEYENNES.

Long ages ago our people lived east and north from here, on the shores of some great lakes. They caught fish and killed birds for food. Their clothing was made of bird

skins, and their tepees were made of the bark of trees. The winters were very cold in that country.

By and by the Cheyennes became discontented, and, leaving the shores of the lakes, travelled south and west to a great river, on the banks of which they camped.

Fish and birds were not so abundant here as near the lakes and soon famine began to destroy the tribe. One youth, in sorrow for the distress of his people, climbed to a hill-top above a great cave where he fasted and prayed for four days. Then the great spirit heard him and told him how he might relieve the distress of the Cheyennes.

After cautioning his people to wait for him this young Cheyenne medicine man entered the cave and through it followed far down into the earth, until at last the trail of the cave terminated in an immense open

prairie. In this prairie was a camp and in the camp the Cheyenne found an old man and an old woman sitting, and near by, a boy and a girl playing.

In the camp too was an abundance of food—stacks of grain and piles of meat, while on the one side were fields of grain and on the other herds of strange four-footed creatures.

The old man explained to the young Cheyenne that the grain was called corn and the animals in the herd were buffaloes, and he also said, "The corn and meat are abundant, and whatever you desire you may carry back to your people for food." Moreover he kindly invited the young Cheyenne to feast and smoke with him, and while the hungry youth ate of the broiled buffalo meat and the parched corn he explained to him in detail how to form the

camp of the Cheyennes in a circle opening toward the rising sun, how to erect the willow pole bearing aloft the nest of the Thunder Bird, and how to worship the great spirit in the sacred sun-dance.

When the feast was ended the old man gave the youth all the meat and corn he could carry, and said, "I will always assist you in caring for the Cheyennes in times of distress."

When the young Cheyenne came again from the cave he found that his people were faint from hunger and he gave them meat, for which they were grateful. At last he asked if all had eaten. Said he, "No Cheyenne must be allowed to suffer from hunger, for here is as much meat left as I thought I had brought in the beginning."

Then some one said, "Old Night-killer is old, and his wife, too, is feeble with age.

They are still hungry, if indeed they are yet alive, for they were too weak to come with us." At this the young leader said, "It is well that you have thought of the old and helpless for that is commendable. Let strong men go and bring these aged ones here quickly."

Thereupon young men ran swiftly back and bore the aged couple quickly to the leader. When the two old people had eaten, there remained no more meat. By this time, however, the shadows of night were falling, and the people, thankful for the refreshing food, soon were ready to retire to their several tepees to rest and sleep.

Early the next morning the Cheyennes were all at the great cave as the young leader had directed, and a large four-footed creature with shaggy head, two strong horns and a mighty body, came out from the great

cave and began eating grass. Then the young man said, "This is a buffalo from the under-land; kill him. The meat you ate yesterday was the flesh of a buffalo."

Quickly the buffalo was killed, his flesh was eaten and his skin was given to old Night-killer for a tepee.

The next morning at sunrise four more buffaloes came out from the cave. On the following morning ten came. On the fourth morning the people all waited and expectantly watched the mouth of the cave, and at sunrise there rushed forth from the cave not only buffaloes, but also elk, deer, antelopes, coyotes, rabbits, squirrels, chipmunks, beavers, and all kinds of game in abundance, while the young Cheyenne, by the wisdom which the great spirit had given him, told his people the name of every creature which came forth, and for what it was

to be used; in what manner it might be most successfully hunted and what regions it inhabited.

Next the people brought a large willow pole and their young medicine man taught them the ceremonies of the great sun-dance of which the chief below the cave had taught him.

The corn which their young leader brought from the under-land the Cheyennes planted and tilled as they were directed, and when winter came again they brought the ears to their camp, and parched the grains and ate them.

"This," said the grandmother, "is our history, as our old people have told it through all our generations." Then old Little Woman sat in silence, gently swaying her body to and fro in the fading firelight, and no one questioned her. Finally

little Hoistah said, "Grandma, did dogs come from the cave?"

The old woman sat still a moment, and then, as if resuming her story, told the legend of

THE DOG.

One evening a strange creature came to old Night-killer's lodge; it looked much like a coyote, but it was larger. The strange animal spoke to old Night-killer and his aged squaw and said, "I am a dog. I came from the northwest to watch your tepee, to draw your lodge poles and to help you in every way I can. I will serve you, but my young shall serve the other Cheyennes."

When the tribe moved out again they crossed the great river in canoes. When they began to travel by land the dog dragged two poles, one fastened to either side of her body. Over these poles, behind

the dog, a skin was fastened from one pole to the other, and into this travois or sledge the camp things of old Night-killer were placed. Old Night-killer and his aged squaw, free from burdens, were then able to keep up with the tribe, as they followed the herds of game far to the west.

When the tribe, after many years, camped in these hills, everybody had dogs, all tepees and camps were circular and opened to the sunrise, and the great sun-dance was observed by all Cheyennes.

Hesitating for only a moment, old Little Woman then began to tell them the legend of

THE SACRED ARROWS.

For a long time our people lived in peace in this western home but the Hō'hā (stone boiler people or Assiniboian Indians) annoyed them, and finally a great battle was

fought between these tribes, and in the battle the Cheyennes lost.

One Cheyenne chief, after the defeat, refused all comfort, but alone in the mountains he fasted and prayed. He could see only trouble for his people in the future. One day in this forest a stranger approached him and said, "Go to a cave at the foot of this hill and you will find four arrows. With these arrows the Cheyennes will always win. Never lose them." Then at once this strange man mysteriously disappeared, and the Cheyenne went to the foot of the hill as he had been directed to do, and sure enough the arrows were there in the cave. Again the Cheyennes made war on the Hoha, and the prophecy of victory came true. This prophecy of victory came true not only with the "Stone Boilers" but with all others, until two of the sacred ar-

rows were lost in a battle with Pawnees many years later.

The Cheyennes always guard these sacred arrows. Even to this day they are kept in a tepee watched over by some wise and able warrior. Down in the valley below this camp all alone, now stands the tepee of the sacred arrows, but we must never, never try to approach it, for it is strictly guarded, and besides it is very sacred.

As the guests of Little Woman retraced their steps homeward Hoistah noticed again the northern lights, still playing in the sky, pale white in colour and fantastic in form, but tirelessly changing.

CHAPTER VI

The Long Trail

Early the next spring a party of white men came to the Cheyenne camp to trade for horses. The warriors of Iron Shirt's tribe were especially rich in ponies and traded some of them with the strange men. For ten days the trading continued, and then the visitors went on to the west, taking many Cheyenne ponies with them, but leaving in exchange guns and ammunition for the warriors, as well as blankets, clothes, beads and ornaments for all the Cheyenne tribe.

Hoistah, like every other Cheyenne, had been provided with some of these luxuries. She had a dress made of beautiful cloth;

not in the style of modern, white women's dresses, of course—but very bright and gay in colour. Over this new dress she wore a large shawl bought from the traders; nor were these all the luxuries she enjoyed, either, for she had a new dolly, and it too had a cloth dress, and its Cheyenne cradle was covered with cloth. Often Hoistah, with her new luxuries, walked over the grassy meadows, or sat among the wild flowers talking to her dolly or singing to it an Indian lullaby.

One day the Cheyennes decided to follow the elk and buffalo herds down the Missouri River to a trading post of which the white men had told them. It would be a long trail, of course, but they would be able to trade furs, elk teeth and buffalo robes to the white men at the end of it. They still had many ponies too, and perhaps

Hoistah

they could exchange some more of them for other luxuries.

Hoistah had learned by this time that the beautiful cloth dress would not stand the rough usage of camp life, in fact, her dress was badly torn and soiled. It had been soiled many times for that matter, and repeated washings had dimmed its bright colours, but the shawl was still as bright as ever.

So it was that when the Cheyennes were preparing for this journey all the beautiful dresses were stored away in a cache or hiding place. Hoistah's cloth dress and her dolly in its cradle were placed in the cache with the others, and again she appeared in her strong doeskin dress ready to mount her sturdy little spotted pony and ride with the tribe.

The Cheyennes followed the game trails

down the valley of the Cheyenne River to the Missouri River, and far out among the immense herds of buffaloes. Every warrior was well armed and well mounted. Every woman and child was mounted, too, and in addition to the weight of the woman or child their little spotted ponies drew the travois containing the property of the tribe. The best ponies were reserved for the men, however, and they bore no extra burden. Each of these choice ponies bore only its one rider—the warrior. Proudly they galloped over the boundless grassy meadows urged forward by the Cheyenne warriors in pursuit of game; but the other ponies, bearing the heavier burdens, kept the straight trail and trudged along tirelessly with their loads. Hoistah rode one of these, with its travois dragging behind it.

One morning Running Wolf reported

that many buffaloes were grazing on a grassy upland near a cliff and could be easily driven over. He had examined the cliff and knew where to lead the herd if he were allowed to act as decoy. He said he had located a convenient crevice into which he could drop and conceal himself safely until the herd passed over his hiding place to their own destruction. And so a buffalo hide and horns were given him, and the drivers, following his direction, prepared for the roundup.

Soon the decoy "buffalo" appeared on a high mound or cliff overlooking the river. Quietly, all the time, the buffaloes were grazing in the open meadow, half a mile back from the cliff but in plain view. Suddenly the mounted Cheyennes appeared in a semi-circle behind the buffaloes and the herd, retreating from them, came nearer and

nearer to the decoy. Faster came the Cheyenne hunters, and soon the retreat of the buffaloes became a panic-stricken flight. The leaders of the frightened herd seeing the decoy "buffalo" made straight for him, of course, and as the hunters saw the success of their scheme they joyfully urged their ponies forward, yelling furiously and firing their guns. On came the buffaloes, up to the decoy and over the deadly fall at full speed.

The women and children with the ponies and travois of the tribe, from a wooded mound some distance to the south, waited for the success of the enterprise, ready to ride to the slaughter pit for their share of buffalo hides. Hoistah watched with keenest interest the whole movement, but when she saw the decoy "buffalo" overtaken by the herd and knocked headlong over the cliff,

followed by the frightened buffaloes plunging to their doom, her heart sank within her, for she felt that in some way Running Wolf had miscalculated, and had been run down by the herd in its last desperate struggle.

Just then the word was given to move forward, and the ponies started on a lope down the long hillside into the valley and up beneath the fatal bluff, where all dismounted and began the work of skinning the dead buffaloes and packing the buffalo hides.

Hoistah helped until it seemed her arms were almost broken and her back ached. At last the hunters came and with them, a greater hero than ever, Running Wolf. He explained how he had run to the edge of the bluff and quickly fastened the buffalo hide on a bush just at the edge of the perilous cliff, and then dropped into a crevice

safely as the first buffaloes came up. Hoistah admired and praised his skill, as with renewed vigor she resumed her work as her mother's helper.

In two days the Indians moved forward again, the ponies hardly strong enough to draw the added weight of hundreds and hundreds of buffalo hides. The wolves feasted and fattened for weeks on the remains left behind.

Once at the trading post the Cheyennes soon disposed of their wares and again moved forward, this time across the plains into the valley of the Platte River. They stayed there several weeks and then the main body of the Cheyennes went on toward the Black Hills to make their winter camp—only Iron Shirt and a small band lingered for several days and followed leisurely up the Platte valley, expecting every day to

meet some traders who had promised to meet them in the upper Platte valley at the end of the hunting season.

The grass was dry, and most of the game had sought other pastures, so that Iron Shirt thought the traders had disappointed him, and hence he decided to leave the valley and go directly home as fast as he could, in order to avoid being caught in the winter storms before he should reach camp.

One evening a lone buffalo was killed, and Meneah was deputed to bring the meat on to camp. Hoistah stayed to help her. They had just loaded the choice meat on Meneah's travois and the hide on Hoistah's, when they beheld a prairie fire, which had broken out to the southward and was sweeping rapidly toward them. The wind was strong, so that the flames came on rapidly, and though the two belated travellers urged

their sturdy ponies forward, the flames crept up closer and closer to them.

Meneah saw at last that they must leave the open prairie where tall grass impeded their ponies' progress and take to one of the numerous buffalo trails leading to the river. If the flames came too close to them they would have to leave their loads, and let the ponies be unimpeded in making the run for safety. So Meneah and Hoistah started on parallel paths for the river.

But soon Hoistah noted that their paths diverged, and before long she was far away from her mother. She thought the trails would again approach each other, or at least each lead to the river, so she rode on and on. Alas, she observed before long, that her path had gradually turned away from the river and the flames cut her off from safety. They were close upon her, and escape

seemed impossible. But she did not hesitate. Quickly she dismounted, and freeing the pony from its load, lashed it away from the hot breath of the flames, to seek safety in flight as best it could. For herself, taking the fresh buffalo hide, she placed it furry side up over the path and rolled herself up in it, and the wild prairie fire roaring and leaping up passed harmlessly over her in its mad race of destruction.

CHAPTER VII

The Long Trail (*Continued*)

Hoistah's pony ran for life along the path it had been following, and just ahead of the coming flames, plunged into a shallow prairie lake among a band of Kiowa Indians, who had taken refuge there, mounted on their ponies.

The Kiowas knew at once that this newcomer was a Cheyenne pony and that they must be close to their most dreaded foes—the Cheyennes of the Black Hills.

Not waiting for the prairie to cool or even for the fire to die out in the burnt stubble, they quickly encased the feet of their ponies in pieces of fresh buffalo hide, for protection, and started for the south.

One of their scouts, Bear Tongue, saw Hoistah, who almost as soon as the flames passed, had begun to retrace her steps, following the path, in which of course there was no burning stubble. Knowing her to be a Cheyenne and fearing that he had been seen by her, the warrior was quick to decide that the safety of his people depended upon his capturing her before she could tell her own people that the Kiowas were near. He overtook her easily, and soon Hoistah, bound securely, found herself again on a pony, in front of a Kiowa squaw, the band riding at a furious rate southward over the scorched plains, with Hoistah a captive. To make matters worse for her, just at dark a downpour of rain cooled the earth and obliterated the telltale trail which the retreating Kiowas had followed with her.

Camp was made finally and sentinels

posted. What should she do? Hoistah for a long, long time feigned sleep. At last she tried ever so gently to untie one of her hands. A quick rude jerk at the rawhide thong told her that the squaw who held it was not asleep and that prisoners in the hands of Kiowas could not easily escape. At last she slept herself, worn out.

After several hours a sudden tumult roused her, and she sat up just as a wounded Kiowa guard was borne into camp and brought before the medicine man at the camp-fire only a few paces from her. At a single glance Hoistah saw the sign of three notches framing a triangle on the shaft of the arrow which had wounded him and instantly she knew that it had been Irion Shirt that directed the fatal missile; she knew too that he had used a bow and arrow, not because he had no better weapon, but in order

to avoid noise. The continuous tumult told her that the Kiowas were out after him. In a little while a gun, the sound of which she thought familiar, told her that another Kiowa was down. During the dead silence that immediately followed the rapid hoof beats of a lone pony sounded over the prairie. Hoistah rightly guessed that Iron Shirt had come alone on the Kiowa trail, and, failing to rescue her, had nevertheless dealt a blow to his enemies. Now, mounted on his favourite black and white stallion in the open prairie, gun in hand, he was really out of danger and away. Still, she was there yet, and as the camp tumult again arose and evil glances were directed toward her a sense of loneliness stole over her in spite of herself. The little girl would have hardly borne it had not the proud Cheyenne spirit of her people asserted itself. Quietly

she lay down again upon the wet earth beside the buffalo robe of her custodian—a prisoner in the hands of bitter enemies, but free from fear, a true Cheyenne, Hoistah, a signal-light-girl, in the darkest time she had known as yet.

The body of the second Kiowa, at whom Iron Shirt had aimed when she heard his shots, Hoistah never saw again, by which she knew that he had no need of the medicine man, that one touch of the Cheyenne warrior's vengeance had been enough.

The next day the Kiowa squaws beat Hoistah several times and were so threatening in their attitude that Bear Tongue, fearing they might kill her and thus deprive him of a valuable slave, took her as prisoner into his own custody.

Thereafter, when his duties called him

from the camp, his son, young Standing Elk, took charge of the captive.

In two weeks the Kiowas reached their own winter camp, and Hoistah's drudgery began in earnest. Old Bear Tongue never abused her, and often spoke kindly to her, but her life was hard all winter.

The next summer a band of Kiowa hunters, while in the Platte valley, were set upon by Iron Shirt's warriors and only three came back to camp. Bear Tongue was one of these three, and he had two fingers missing from his left hand and there was an ugly scar on his face that he bore always thereafter. He never again protected Hoistah and her lot was not an easy one, under her other guardians, but as she grew and gained in strength she was determined that some day she would defend herself and make an escape.

Two winters and two summers passed. The third summer of Hoistah's captivity the Kiowas visited the Wichitas, in their village of grass houses in the south, and Hoistah accompanied them there. One of the young warriors of the Wichitas offered a pony for the girl but old Bear Tongue refused the offer, as her captor thought she would be fully grown in another year or two and be worth three or four ponies, and, in the meantime, her work was worth her keep. Hoistah, of course, had no part in this proposed exchange, and only learned of it through young Standing Elk. By this time Hoistah could understand and speak the Kiowa language, and communication was easy, for good or bad news. Standing Elk told his companion, young Black Duck, too, of the young Wichita's offer of a pony for Hoistah and its refusal and Black Duck

secretly decided to possess the pretty Cheyenne girl for himself.

One day not long afterward Bear Tongue's squaw, dissatisfied with some of Hoistah's work, struck her, and Hoistah resented the chastisement. In the height of the excitement that followed young Black Duck, who happened to be riding by, quickly intervened in the combat, and sent the old squaw, smarting from the lashes he gave her, to the tepee. From this time on he began to pay noticeable attention to Hoistah, so much so that all the Kiowas derided him. Bear Tongue's squaw said to Black Duck's mother, "Your boy is a fool. He is trying to steal our slave, but you know the Kiowa law. Whenever I catch him with her I am coming straight to your tepee and take your Navajoe blankets and your beaded belt." "No," said the other squaw.

"He is not a fool. He may steal the girl, but you are not smart enough to catch him; if you do, I agree to abide by our ancient custom. Whenever you are smart enough to catch my son love-making come on and help yourself."

Young Black Duck did in a way make love to Hoistah, watched out for her and championed her; but she, though grateful to him for his protection, did not really care for him.

Four years had almost passed in her captivity for Hoistah before something of importance to her came about. In council one morning the Kiowas decided that, since they could no longer hunt in the Platte valley in peace because of the attacks of the Cheyennes, they would go to the valley of the Arkansas and take the whole tribe with them for the hunting season.

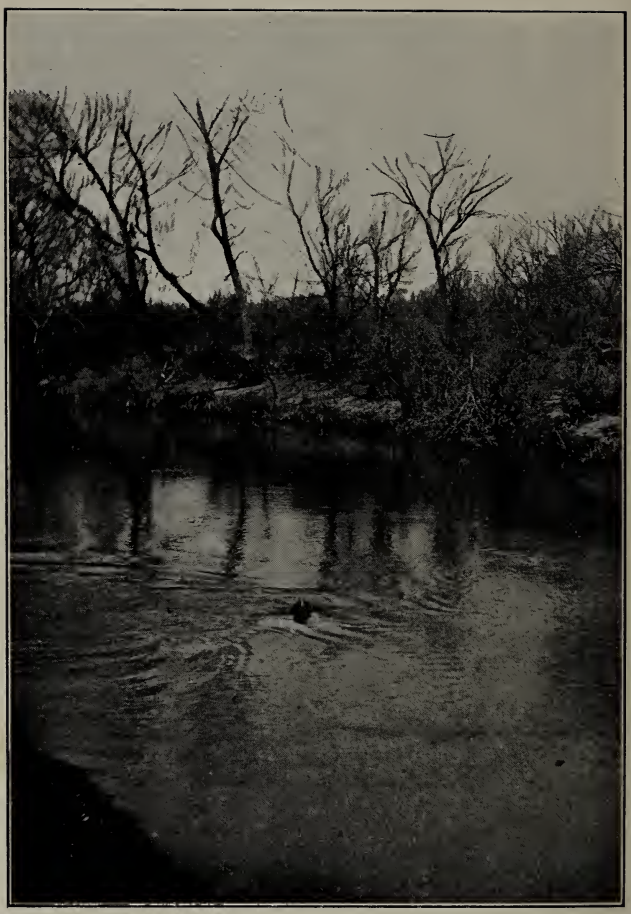
Bear Tongue as camp crier was still calling in heavy tones at different points of the camp, "To-morrow the whole tribe will move to the valley of the Arkansas River to hunt," when from a clump of bushes near her Hoistah at her work heard Black Duck say to her, "To-night you will find a pony tied beneath the big cottonwood tree at the third bend of the river below our camp. At the foot of the tree are a blanket and dried meat. On the second morning from now you can be at the double mountain half-way from here to the Wichita village. I will be there waiting for you. What say you?" Hoistah answered: "It cannot be worse than this life. I thank you. Go quickly."

As all the Kiowas, in the confusing times following the camp crier's announcement, were busy in their various ways they did not notice young Black Duck, within an hour or

so, leaving the camp on one pony, leading another with a pack upon its back. Neither did they notice Hoistah at dusk disappear into the grove by the river bank.

Hoistah had fully made up her mind as to what she was going to do before she left the camp, and when she found the pony and the provisions in the place Black Duck had told her of, she took them as her own and rode in the opposite direction, away from the double mountain—toward her own people. All night she rode, crossing and re-crossing the river to cover her trail should any one pursue. But no one followed. In the Kiowa camp every one said, "I thought so. Black Duck has stolen old Bear Tongue's slave girl."

As for Black Duck he knew that Hoistah cared little for him, but he thought to get a wife, and an industrious one too, at



Swimming Across After Her

small cost. All the next day and far on into the night he rode on to the double mountain, but nowhere found the trail of Hoistah. After two days waiting in vain he sought the tribe again in the valley of the Arkansas and learned that Hoistah was not with them. Black Duck never told how Hoistah escaped, but he could never give a satisfactory explanation as to his other pony. However, he told what no one could disprove, and what was in a way partly true, when he said it had strayed away while he was on the road to the country of the Wichitas.

When Hoistah left the Kiowa camp she was followed by her faithful dog, a little four-footed friend who had been more kind to her than any one else in camp, not excepting Black Duck. Try as she would she could not induce the doggy to cease following her. Whenever she crossed the river at

night or by day she would be sure to see him swimming across after her, always keeping out of harm's way in his pursuit of her.

On the afternoon of the first day she hobbled her pony and turned him loose to graze. After eating of the dried meat and giving a portion of it to her obstinate, faithful dog she wrapped herself in the blanket and slept. When she awoke it was nearly morning again as she could tell by the moon.

Again she ate of the meat, fed the dog his portion, found the pony, and mounting left the timber of the river valley to ride straight across the open prairies toward the north star—toward the dear old Black Hills and home.

CHAPTER VIII

End Of The Long Trail

When the morning sun came out and warmed the earth, Hoistah dropped the blanket from her shoulders, and rode steadily forward through the great sea of waving grass, often looking back to see if she were being pursued. When she could urge the tired pony no farther she dismounted, ate her share of the dried meat as before, gave a small portion to the dog and slept in the warm sun.

Late in the afternoon she awoke and started onward, but the pony was tired and lame and could hardly go. Lucky it was for the dog too, for if Hoistah had travelled at the same rapid rate as on the first night

and day the dog would have had to fall behind and be eaten by the wolves. As night settled down the pony seemed to recover somewhat his usual strength but he was still lame. Very slowly the little group moved on over the plains, the coyotes, disturbed by the travellers, howling dolefully as they passed. Far into the night they travelled, and at last, almost overcome with sleepiness, Hoistah was about to decide to camp for the night when a huge dark moving mass far ahead of her claimed her attention. In a second she had stopped her pony and recognised by the sounds that the moving object was a herd of buffaloes passing across her trail. The trail would be blocked for miles and miles ahead of her, and so she dismounted to await the coming of daylight and the passing of the herd. She ate a little more of the dried meat, but could

give none to the dog, so very little of it all remained.

Morning came and the buffaloes were just passing out of sight, leaving the way open to resume her journey northward. She had no water that morning, nor had the pony or the dog had anything to drink since the morning before.

She ate a little of the meat as she rode along, but the unusual heat of the sun and her thirst distressed her. That day she did not look back so frequently, for she felt certain no Kiowas were trailing her. Several times during the forenoon she was compelled to stop that the pony might rest. About ten o'clock she saw signs of rain. As soon as she was sure she dismounted, and, with the knife she had brought with her, quickly dug up the earth, scooping it out with her hands into a kind of basin, with

a little ravine to form a pool and catch as much as possible of the water. The rain came and she took shelter beneath her pony; the clouds passed by and the three thirsty travellers drank long at the little pool, Hoistah first, and then the dog and the pony both at the same time. Hoistah ate what was left of her dried meat and the pony, refreshed, ate of the grass. There was no food for the dog—but he did not need it, for soon, in accordance with the due law of need and Cheyenne custom he was converted into meat. The choice portions of him were prepared and taken, and Hoistah with her supply of dog meat rode on over the great plains northward.

Gradually the pony recovered from the lameness caused by the first hard riding and each day found the travellers some thirty or forty miles further to the north.

No flint was to be found on the plains, therefore Hoistah could make no fire or cook her meat. She was compelled to keep on travelling and so she could not dry the meat and it soon spoiled; then starvation again threatened. Turning from the open plains, Hoistah rode westward toward the mountains where some small game, some berries or wild fruit might be found. Subsisting upon what fruit and berries she could find she went on northward through the foot-hills.

Late one evening she discovered some mountain quail in their covey beneath a bunch of grass, and striking at them with a heavy stick she killed three of them. She found a flint too and with her knife handle, she obtained sparks by means of which she ignited some small fragments of dried bark and started a fire. She broiled her game at

the fire and for a time again knew no hunger.

The night winds were cold in the foothills, she found, and she kept up the fire. Well for her she did that night, for the wolves, smelling the game, came about her camp in great numbers, and but for the fire and their fear of it would no doubt have caused her trouble. She gathered a great pile of wood and all night kept the fire blazing. When she slept, leaning against a large boulder, the fire at her feet protected her, for wolves will not come very close to fire at night. At intervals she would awake and replenish the blaze. Several times she threw burning brands among the hungry pack of wolves and routed them.

She had a good breakfast of more quail and rode on, but found no dinner and no supper. At night she again built a fire

at her camp though no wolves came. Riding on again, early the next morning she came upon a trail in which the prints of the "strong moccasions of the white man" showed. She followed this and presently came to a lone cabin. Long she sat on her pony before the cabin patiently. At last a smoke appeared over the cabin, noise came from within, and a man came out.

The man, a frontiersman, quickly got his long rifle, and spoke to Hoistah gruffly.

"What ye want? Be keerful—no foolin' round here—I know you Kiowas."

Hoistah, recognising the word "Kiowa" and guessing that he thought her one, shook her head and quickly made the sign for Cheyenne—three strokes across the left wrist with the fingers of the right hand. The white man then addressed her in the sign language and also spoke a few

words of the Cheyenne tongue. Easily he understood her story, and knew she wanted to find her own people, the Cheyennes.

He brought her dried vension in great quantities and of most excellent quality, also some bread, a smaller quantity but not of such excellent quality. Next he gave her the skin of a mountain sheep partly filled with water. When these were packed on her pony he directed her, in sign language, to ride northeast into the plains about four days' journey. There, according to his belief, she would find the Cheyennes hunting buffaloes.

As Hoistah rode away he said, "Well, she's only a chile but she sartainly must be Cheyenne; no Kiowa about that Injun gal. Guess I'll jist stick around the shack today and keep my ammunition handy any-

how." Hoistah passed out of sight. On, with a heart full of hope and gratitude, she rode, the little Cheyenne maiden, into the northern part of the upper Platte valley, to the hunting grounds of her people.

Packed on her pony she had now a good supply of food and plenty of water for a long journey. The pony could get enough water to keep him alive from the dew he got with the grass at night and early morning, and from occasional drinking at streams and prairie lakes.

On the morning of the third day Hoistah thought she caught a glimpse of something that moved in the grass not far in front of her, and stopped her pony quickly, but she could see nothing plain. Knowing the risk she ran if a Cheyenne scout should mistake her for a Kiowa, as the white man at the cabin had, she made the sign of the Chey-

enne, and that sign perhaps saved her life, for the best scout of Iron Shirt's young Cheyenne braves at that very instant had levelled a long rifle at her at a distance of some sixty yards. It was the movement of this same scout she had noticed in the grass, and he had carefully concealed himself immediately thereafter.

Soon Running Wolf, for this famous scout was no other, looked closely at Hoistah, lowered the deadly piece, and placing his hands to his mouth imitated the hooting of an owl four times in succession. Hoistah answered in Cheyenne, "Dzĭ'-tsĭstä's!" (Our own people.) "I am Hoistah."

At once a tall Cheyenne arose from his hiding place and came forward to the weary wanderer. Hoistah, calling him by name, drew his hand to her cheek. Run-

White Fool's Cabin

ning Wolfe said, "It is well," and he drew Hoistah's blanket about them; thus, as she sat on her pony and the tall Cheyenne stood beside her, they were drawn face to face and lip to lip in the primitive marriage ceremony of the tribe.

Hoistah related the story of her four years as briefly as she could, and a signal from the scout soon brought the Cheyenne hunting party to them.

Iron Shirt took his lost child's head between his hands and held her for a long time. Then he said to Running Wolf, "Keep her with my blessing."

Hoistah noticed that her father bore a deep scar on his breast and that one arm had been mangled. He looked much older, and thus she knew that he had fought the Kiowas not only bravely but recklessly and relentlessly. But she could not speak, lest

she should disclose unseeming emotion to him.

That night she told of the white man and his kindness, and the old chief said, "It is 'White Fool.' We saved him from death at the hands of the Sioux Indians once. He was digging gold then; he is still at that foolishness."

Some days later Iron Shirt found the white man and gave him a pony.

The hunting trip was cut short presently because there were no prospects for Kiowa scalps, and the party returned to the Black Hills and Hoistah's "Long Trail" ended at home.

CHAPTER IX

At Home

When the Cheyenne hunting party came home and Hoistah's return was made known there was great rejoicing in the camp. Her marriage to the popular young warrior, Running Wolf, was a bit of news for the squaws at least to revel in further.

Running Wolf's people brought skins and poles for a tepee, and Hoistah's people brought blankets, buckskin, and household implements, so that the new home was soon completed in all details. Drying meat in abundance hung on rawhide strings stretched from tree to tree about the new tepee. Running Wolf was a skilful hunter, but the labours of the husband did

not in any wise surpass those of his mate, for the industry and skill of Hoistah in domestic duties were remarkable even among Cheyenne girls.

When the corn and pumpkins were ripe Hoistah, with her pony and travois laboured with the other women till all the homes were provided with plenty. Next the deer hides were dressed, and in this labour Hoistah excelled and helped too. In the fall the warriors went to a trading post that had lately been established on the upper Missouri River to get blankets, cloth, guns, ammunition and such other supplies as might be needed. Running Wolf went with them; he had many furs, skins and ponies to exchange, and promised to bring back some bright cloth for Hoistah. He would bring her some pretty beads too, he said, that during the stormy weather she might

use in decorating moccasions and clothes. The traders were gone for several weeks, Hoistah and the other women remaining behind, busy in their various ways at home.

One day Hoistah, with several other women, went far westward from camp to gather nuts. They were gone all day, so that they were not in camp when, about midday, the traders returned with their supplies from the trading post of the white men.

Running Wolf had brought back all he had promised to bring and much more. Among other luxuries he had bought a canvas tepee. Eagerly he took the skins from the tepee poles and placed the new canvas thereon, proud that he had now a new tepee made by white men. In this new tepee were placed the many things he had brought from the trading post, and

around it grazed his tired ponies glad to be relieved of burdens.

Several times during the afternoon he was seen standing by the new tepee and looking for Hoistah, who just at sunset returned with the other women of the nutting party. Their ponies each bore two baskets, one on either side fastened together by a strip of rawhide, and every basket was filled with nuts.

That night, as darkness settled over the valley, a large camp fire was lighted, glad voices joined the rhythmic sounds of the tom-toms, and hundreds of tireless feet moved in unison with the fantastic music.

As Hoistah joined in the social dance it seemed to her a long, long time ago that she had been a slave girl in old Bear Tongue's camp on the Washita River. But she rejoiced that the old Kiowa had not ac-

cepted the young Wichita's offer and doomed her to a life in a grass house among the plains and mountains far to the south. Sometimes she thought of Black Duck and wished that she could, in some way, have repaid him for the protection he gave her. But, she thought too, he is a Kiowa. Again the voice of Iron Shirt drew her eyes to him, as by oral commands he directed the dance, and the mangled arm and the deep scar on his breast appeared; then her heart hardened toward the whole Kiowa tribe.

Soon the swell of the singers' voices, the heroic words telling of the valour of the Cheyennes of old, or the deep tones of Running Wolf's voice as he spoke to her in passing, filled her soul with so much joy that she forgot all her past sufferings, almost forgot even her enemies.

When the eastern sky was lighted by the rising sun the Cheyenne said, "We are satisfied," and Hoistah walked with Running Wolf to their new tepee. Once at home they spread before themselves the presents they had received at the dance, and Hoistah said, "I never thought in the days of my bondage that I should be so rich." All day they slept.

That night and many other nights during the winter the Cheyennes sat in groups about their camp-fires and told of adventures, or repeated legends and traditions of their tribe.

Hoistah's home was often sought upon these winter evenings, when she would relate the adventures of her captive life and the traditions of the Kiowas. One winter's night there was among her guests her very feeble and withered old grandmother, Little

Woman, now childish and ill, who had asked Meneah to take her to Hoistah's tepee that she too might hear some of the legends of the Kiowas.

Tenderly Hoistah received the feeble old woman, and, at her bidding, related the legend of

THE KIOWA MEDICINE MAN.

Once an old woman of the Kiowas was neglected by her children, so that she often suffered for want of food.

One evening there came to her tepee a poor boy who had neither parents, home, nor tribe. "Good old lady, may I live in your tepee?" asked the boy. "I have only a handful of parched corn and a few berries but I will divide with you," said the old lady. The boy lived with her, but they were still poor and neglected.

When the boy became a youth he provided food and shelter for the old lady.

One year there was a famine, and the chief, Sitting Bear, in a final effort to relieve distress, passed through all the camp asking if any one could suggest a way of securing food, for he said his people must soon have relief or perish.

Now the youth who lived with the poor old woman was favoured by the great spirit, so he called the chief and said, "If you and all the Kiowas will follow my directions you will get plenty of food soon." And old Sitting Bear agreed.

First the youth caused a lone tepee to be erected in a river valley. Before the tepee a stone boiler filled with water was placed over the fire and the aged men were sent into the tepee to sing sacred songs. Then the youth, bearing a wand and dressed

in an untanned deer skin worn as a robe, came in. Plucking some of the hairs from his robe he threw them into the boiling water. Then over the water he waved four times in succession first his medicine bag and then the wand. Finally he twisted the leg of the deer-hide robe he wore, and a deer was heard to bleat.

Next he sent the old men back to camp and told them to assemble the whole tribe in a circle down by the river bank just before daylight on the following morning. Each Kiowa was instructed further to bring a certain wild flower as an offering.

When they assembled it was still dark, and a dense fog filled the air. The youth directed them to cast their presents of wild flowers within the circle and join hands. Following his directions they danced around this magic circle singing a sacred song.

When the fog arose the flowers were gone, but the circle was filled with deer and the famine was over. By that the Kiowas knew that the great spirit was with this youth who lived with the poor old woman.

Old Little Woman said that, although the Kiowas were an evil tribe, this was a good legend.

Other visitors came to Hoistah's tepee, and she would always tell them some legend, or relate some adventure that never failed to satisfy her guests. So passed the winter at home, until the snows melted.

Early in the spring, when the elk shed their horns, the Cheyennes moved down into the valleys.

CHAPTER X

The Sun-Dance

On the night following the prairie fire in the Platte valley, when Iron Shirt failed to rescue Hoistah from the Kiowas, he had retreated alone, bearing a slight arrow wound himself and leaving one Kiowa dead and another dying. His warriors had preceded him to the North, and the two old men and three boys in his party, ten or twelve miles from the Kiowa camp, knew that they could not, even when directed by the chief's skill and led by his valour, hope to overcome thirty or forty Kiowa warriors.

As the disappointed chief rode back to his camp after his unsuccessful attempt he vowed to the great spirit that if ever

he could rescue Hoistah from the Kiowas he would make the "Lodge of the Willow Dance," that is, he would give the tribal sun-dance. This of course would put him to enormous expense, and yet it would be worth the almost unparalleled favour of the great spirit in permitting him an act that both his valour as a warrior and his parental instinct urged upon him.

His tribe never knew the vow he had made, but had they known they would not have thought the warrior rested his case too completely upon the power of the Deity, for more than ample evidence was shown that Iron Shirt gave his full strength to the task. It seemed that the Cheyenne chief had determined upon a long war of extermination against the Kiowas.

Thus it came about that one night, soon after Hoistah's return, Iron Shirt called his

war band, the Dog Warriors, together in council. When the members were all assembled in the warriors' lodge, Iron Shirt came in, his hands and face covered with red paint. He smoked the council pipe with the brothers of this ancient Cheyenne military order, and then arose and said:

"One dark night all alone I trailed the Kiowas and watched their camp that I might recover my child they had stolen. Stealthily I approached their sentinel and my arrow pierced his body, but the aim was not good, for he raised his voice to his fellows. When I reached my pony I shot another of their warriors with my long rifle. As I rode back to my camp I promised the great spirit that if I could rescue my child from her captors I would make the Willow Lodge. I did not directly rescue her, but she is here. By my vow I am bound.

Every year I have fought the Kiowas, and I am far from rich. All that I have I now give to make the lodge, but it is not enough."

Silence reigned for a full minute, and then old Yellow Hawk said: "Brothers of the Ancient Dog-Warrior Band, Iron Shirt's heart is true. He is our brother and our sworn companion. He has often led us to bloody victory. Shall this band of brothers help him make the Willow Lodge?" A chorus of voices answered, "Be it so," and then the band of warriors passed silently out into the night.

One week later the band feasted and discussed the time and place where the Willow or Sun-Dance Lodge should be raised. It was decided to make it as soon as the grass was full height and the willow and cottonwood were in full leaf. The place desig-

nated was the lower Cheyenne River valley near the south bank of the stream.

All winter Iron Shirt collected paints, jerked meat, pipes, robes, medicine roots, feathers, and such other articles as would be needed, and his brothers of the Dog Band too contributed liberally.

When due time arrived all was in readiness, and the man-sticks (forty-four brightly painted small willow sticks) were sent to the forty-four sub-chiefs of the tribe. Iron Shirt himself visited the leaders of all the sacred and military bands with special invitations.

When the grass was full height and willow and cottonwood leaves were fully grown Iron Shirt and his brothers of the Dog-Warrior Band went to the valley of the Cheyenne River previously designated, and marked off a circle more than a mile in

diameter, indicating the places for each of the bands in the order of their importance.

The opening of the circle to the eastward was about a quarter of a mile wide. Immediately to the south of this opening a place was indicated for the sacred Aorta Band and the Dog-Warrior Band. At the north of the entrance a space was reserved for the Hive Band and the Buffalo-Bull Warrior Band; on the western rim of the circle were spaces for the Fur-Men Band, and for the Sutai or adopted people. Between these several centres lesser bands were to be located. There were places for all, even the outlaws.

The ancient order of the Sacred Arrow-Medicine led by Lame Bull came early the next morning, and before night Blue Horse had led in his band of Fox Warriors, and

in turn all the different bands, sacred and military, had arrived and their tepees were placed within the mighty circle—more than six hundred tepees.

On the first day the tepee of Running Wolf was dedicated as the warrior tepee, so he and Hoistah moved out to give place for the secret councils. Black Wolf was selected High Priest on the second day, and the warrior tepee, being moved in toward the centre of the circle, became known as the Lone Tepee, and was thereafter given up to the priests.

On the third day the priests and the Lodge Maker, Iron Shirt, abandoning the Lone Tepee, came into the open of the circle with their ceremonies.

On that day Running Wolf in full war paint, armed and mounted, searched in the woods until a suitable tree for a lodge pole

was found, and then he addressed the tree as follows: "I went into the plains of the Platte River. I trailed the Kiowas. Three scalps hung at my belt. I was a boy then. Again as a young man I went into the same region and trailed the Kiowa warriors. I rode with a band of young braves against them and few escaped our vengeance. Seven Kiowa scalps were at my belt. I have trailed you far. You too shall fall!" Then he struck with his tomahawk four times, thus marking the tree for the great centre pole of the Willow Dance. Others following hewed it down, painted it and placed it upright for the centre pole of the mighty lodge. But first a bundle of willow branches was fastened to the top end of it as a nest for the great Thunder Bird. At the foot of the centre pole was the altar of branches, foliage, rainbow-sticks, and

sacred relics. Thus the Willow Lodge was completed.

Then the priests and the Dog-Warrior Band in fantastic costumes—limb and bodies painted—danced the great sacred Sun-Dance, and the people joined in the worship.

Running Wolf had been deeply interested in Hoistah before her capture. He, too, during her captivity had made a vow. He had pledged that if he could rescue Hoistah from the Kiowas he would, at the next Sun-Dance of the tribe execute a dance suspended by the skin of his back from the lodge pole. He too, felt bound to fulfil his vow. Thus it was that old Red Shield, whom Running Wolf took into his confidence, went with the young warrior aside and cutting the skin on the young warrior's back fastened skewers therein and attached

new rawhide thongs to these. By these thongs, fastened to the lodge poles above, Red Shield drew Running Wolf up until his toes could just touch the ground. Thus Running Wolf danced. The skin tore loose from his back more and more. The fresh rawhide finally stretched so that within an hour's time the warrior could dance back and forth for several paces. No shadow of pain crossed his face during the four long hours he danced to the music of the sacred songs and joined in the singing, suspended by the skin of his back with rawhide thongs.

When all vows were fulfilled and all ceremonies ended the great Cheyenne Tribe again separated into bands, and Iron Shirt's Band returned to their camp on the bank of the Cheyenne River among the Black Hills.

When Iron Shirt's family, last to leave the grounds, started home, Meneah had only one robe to carry of all she had brought; Iron Shirt would have been compelled to walk home had not a pony been given him. But in their ceremonies they had symbolised the re-creating of all things or the making of a new life; and with his lost child recovered and his vow fulfilled the chief faced stoically the necessity of making a new start in everything.

CHAPTER XI

Moni'nieo

(women who have chosen)

No form of household work was neglected by Hoistah, but in the making of moccasins and dress patterns she greatly desired to excel. This desire was heightened, too, by the necessity of providing clothing for her child, little Elk Robe, who had come into her life the previous winter. Her wish to join the Guild of Decorative Art becoming known to the members of that industrial order she was permitted to become a member.

Prospective members were always expected to give presents to the individual members of the guild and to prepare a feast

for all. The feasting and the presents provided for the members by Hoistah were of the usual kind, and without attracting undue attention she became in time a full member. Soon, however, it became obvious to the mistress of the order that the new member was destined to achieve more distinction than her own in the chosen handicraft, for not only did Hoistah exhibit anxiety to learn but she showed great originality in designing.

One day when the guild met, Hoistah exhibited to the members a pattern for a baby dress. It consisted of beaded work in four colours forming a simple cross and appearing four times in the pattern. Each part of each of the four designs contained four colours.

Discussion of the proposed design became general, and finlly the leader said, "I can

see no merit in the pattern, but before a decision is given Hoistah may explain the symbolism of her design. She is now a full member of this guild and we must hear her, even if her design is poor and her arguments are worse." When the leader had ceased speaking, but before Hoistah had time to rise and reply, an old squaw said spitefully, "Possibly Hoistah can tell us how she borrowed that pattern from her friends the Kiowas." At this several members laughed, but when Hoistah arose all were silent.

Unmindful of the thrust of this old querulous woman, Hoistah in a clear, calm voice and in an oratorical style that would have done credit to her illustrious father, said, "Sisters of this ancient Guild of Decorative Art, hear me patiently and then judge my design. This pattern is not bor-

rowed from any one, but designed for my own little babe, as you know. Its symbolism is thus explained:

"The four points composed by two lines crossing each other (at right angles) represent the four directions, North, South, East and West. These directions should guide the child in all its travels; the four colours represent the four phases of each recurring day, daylight, night, dawn and twilight; the cross occurs four times, representing the four phases of human life, infancy, youth, manhood and old age; collectively they indicate the hope of a mother that her child's conduct through life shall be true in each of the four parts of every day throughout the four possible periods that man may live. The centre of this symbolism is the sacred number four. It was on the fourth day after our first medicine man went into the

cave of the earth that he returned with food for the starving Cheyennes; the fourth day from that time, game was given into our people; four is the number of sacred arrows that have often led our people to victory." Then pausing she said, "What is your judgment?" and a chorus of voices answered, "It is to be as your wisdom has designed."

When Hoistah's pattern had been approved by unanimous vote, and the judgment of their leader disapproved by the same vote, that meant a desire to change leaders. Then the former mistress of the guild and the old squaw who had made the disparaging remarks arose to leave the tepee, but Hoistah said, "Hold! Your vows as true Cheyennes keep you here and enjoin your co-operation; besides I need your help, the help of all my sisters and the approval of the great spirit if I in my early

womanhood must in obedience to these voices assume the direction of this Guild. Stay with us and help us." Then the former mistress of the guild sat at Hoistah's feet, but the old squaw sat at the outer edge of the circle and all was again harmonious.

Thereafter Hoistah studied that she might help her sisters who trusted her. The symbol of the sacred number "four" in various forms appeared more and more in the decorative art of this band of Cheyennes, and all were glad that Hoistah had been chosen as the leader of the guild.

Under Hoistah's guidance the guild prospered. No new undertaking was begun except after prayer. The symbolism, too, always thereafter, was of a sacred nature, and the old, old people of the tribe said that Hoistah was best of all the leaders of the Mon inieo they had ever known.

CHAPTER XII

Valley of the Arkansas

For three winters more, after Hoistah became the mistress of her industrial guild, this band of Cheyennes camped in the Black Hills. Then the Cheyenne tribe made a treaty with the United States government, one of the terms of which was that all Cheyennes should leave the Black Hills and live in the valley of the Arkansas River. They were told that in this new locality they would be unmolested by hostile Indians and find plenty of game, and that the national government would contribute to their support.

It was understood, therefore, that when the tepees were taken down once more in the

Black Hills they would not again be placed in permanent positions until they came to southeastern Colorado. The old home was accordingly abandoned forever, and all the Cheyennes moved out over the plains to make a new one. Slowly they travelled, taking all their belongings with them, regretting the parting from the land of their fathers, but trusting the promises of the white man that peace and prosperity should be found in the valley of the Arkansas. They went on and on, day after day, week after week, until at last they camped on the bank of the Arkansas River in a new home —a land of promise.

In their new home these Cheyennes frequently saw white men, traders, freighters on the Santa Fé trail and gold seekers, and learned much of their ways. The members of Iron Shirt's band were always glad to

be known as friends to the pale-faces and tried to adapt themselves to a new environment, but not all of them succeeded.

The skill of Running Wolf in hunting supplemented by occasional help from the Agency, kept Hoistah and her little ones from want, but many of the Cheyennes at this time actually suffered on account of a lack of proper food, shelter and clothing.

Because of the presence of so many white men in their new home, and because the allotted hunting grounds were too small, Cheyenne hunting parties frequently went far to the south. One party of Cheyenne hunters, about forty in number, while in the south once, camped on the Washita River and were surprised and massacred by the Kiowas.

When news of this atrocity reached the Cheyenne camp Iron Shirt at once led his

braves into Kiowaland to avenge the blood of his tribesmen. To the women left behind, no tidings came from them for several weeks, and Hoistah as well as the others of the camp began to fear that Iron Shirt's warriors too had become victims of Kiowa treachery and cruelty.

No news came until, late one night, a tumult arose in camp and Running Wolf was carried wounded into his tepee in silence. In silence Hoistah brought her husband food, and silently he ate it. Then without a word he drew a blanket over him, reclined upon a buffalo robe and slept. With true Indian stoicism Hoistah had questioned him nothing, but as soon as she knew he was sound asleep she arose with a heavy heart and sought her mother's tent. Her mother never spoke or even looked up as Hoistah entered her tepee, but just sat

in silence. Hoistah, almost overcome with wonder and emotion, stole away home and on the path met her younger sister and heard how their father had fallen while leading a charge against the Kiowas and how Running Wolf had brought the chieftian's body out before the Kiowas could take the scalplock, and, returning, had led the Cheyennes to victory—a dearly bought victory but a decisive one. Hoistah heard also that Running Wolf had been chosen chief of their band of Cheyennes. She could not trust herself to speak for fear of showing the emotions she felt, as she entered her own home again. Long she sat in her tepee that winter's night, listening to the laboured breathing of her wounded husband, and, gazed at the dying embers of the tepee fire, pondering over the future of the Cheyennes.

In the morning Running Wolf told her at last of her father's death—such a death as an old warrior would desire—in the red battle. Then he added: "In death he wore his scalplock untouched by enemies." As to the chieftainship, he said: "To be chief now that we are subjected to laws not our own, and at a time when our old customs are dying out, is not a glorious privilege, but a duty. I shall serve."

A few weeks later Running Wolf was able to leave his tepee and take up his new duties. The traders, the gold hunters, the freighters on the Sante Fé trail, and passing strangers knew him as the lame Cheyenne chief, but they all trusted him.

At last peace was made between the Kiowas and their allies, the Comanches, and wars in the south ceased. When the white men called a great peace council at Fort

Laramie a few years later, Sioux, Assiniboian, Crow, Mandan, Arikara, Cheyenne and Arapahoe warriors sat in council with white soldiers. The "lame" Cheyenne's voice was for peace, and peace was agreed to by all the western tribes present, before Running Wolf returned to his people. Soon after this an epidemic of cholera swept away many of the band of Cheyennes to which Hoistah and Running Wolf belonged, just as a few years before an epidemic of smallpox had destroyed fully half of their number. Among the victims of the later epidemic was the "lame" Cheyenne chief, Running Wolf, friend of the pale-face. Too few of the band remained now that they did not elect another chief, but joined with other Cheyenne bands. Hoistah and her children lived with Black Kettle's band who still trusted in the pale-faced people.

Several years later still these friendly Cheyennes were attacked by Chivington's Colorado Volunteers. The attack was unwarranted and unexpected; many Cheyennes were ruthlessly killed—women and children as well as warriors. In the list of killed were the only living children and grandchildren of Hoistah.

Afterwards Black Kettle fell fighting "pony soldiers" and Hoistah was without a home. Then her heart turned against the pale-faced people forever. In her old age, widowed, childless and homeless, she learned to distrust the great government from which she had always hoped for help and guidance.

A general peace among the plains Indians west and south having been established, the Cheyennes, in accordance with Indian customs, often made formal tribal visits to other Indians. On none of these tribal

visits to the Kiowas did Hoistah accompany her people, but through others she learned that old Bear Tongue was killed in the same battle in which Iron Shirt lost his life, that Black Duck and a band of his comrades were slain by "pony soldiers" and trampled under the "iron moccasins" of their ponies far down in the south land. Neither kindred, old friend, nor old-time enemy of Hoistah was among the living. She was indeed alone in the world and out of harmony with her times.

It was small wonder that Hoistah now first evinced disrespect for the teaching of the missionaries. Once when some one advised her to follow the teachings of the missionaries and adopt some custom of the white people she said:

"When I die I hope I shall be wrapped in a robe and hoisted on a scaffold. Per-

haps whistling winter winds will soon blow me down to earth, and my bones will be rattled over the plains by wild beasts. But until my bones are separated one from the other I shall remain a Cheyenne and continue to despise the pale-faced people and all their ways."

CHAPTER XIII

Seeking a New Home

As white men continued to establish homes, build cities, and in every way occupy the valley of the Arkansas, the Cheyennes found their only vocation, hunting, becoming less and less profitable, and at last they decided to leave this region and return to their former home in the Black Hills. Under constraint from the national government, however, they altered their decision, and agreed to move southward to the region in Oklahoma lying between the Cimarron and the North Canadian Rivers.

To make sure that the Cheyennes did not alter their last decision, United States

cavalry under command of General Lawton was sent to escort them to their new home. Old Hoistah's proud spirit revolted at the thought of "pony soldiers" and she declared she would never obey any military orders from them. As she could not live alone she had of course to prepare to move south with the Cheyennes, but protested strongly against being taken to this new home by United States soldiers.

At last the soldiers came. Several days of preparation followed and then southward along or near the Kansas-Colorado line the Cheyennes moved under their military escort, and southward along the same line Hoistah went at the same time, but she was not moving under any orders from the troopers. Her tepee poles were fastened on either side of her faithful spotted pony and all her possessions were placed in the

travois, while she herself mounted and rode as fast or as slow as she pleased.

On the first day of travel Hoistah's conduct was noticed by one of the officers, who upon making inquiry heard that this "old squaw" was "harmless but peculiar." The interpreter assured the officer that he need have no concern for squaws, though he had better carefully watch the movements of the warriors, some of whom contemplated escaping to join the Sioux. Thus it was that without molestation Hoistah travelled pretty much as she pleased.

At the edge of the Cheyenne reservation the party stopped for the night and Hoistah pitched her tepee near by. Next morning, when the tribe, still escorted by the cavalry, moved on she remained behind and could not be induced to move. She was tired, she said, and besides she thought that, as the

tribe had reached the Cheyenne reservation the soldier escort should return. Late in the afternoon she moved on southward, following the wide trail made by the Cheyennes and the "pony soldiers," but not rejoining them. The trail presently led close to the North Canadian River, where they were camped, but here Hoistah turned aside and rode up the valley several miles to a bend in the river and camped by herself, alone.

In a little cove by a small lake, beneath the wide branches of a giant elm tree, she erected her tepee. South and east of her tepee were dunes fringed with cottonwood trees; east and north was the lake girdled with trees and west of her, just near enough so that she could faintly hear the low murmur of waters in its wide sandy bed, flowed the North Canadian River. The willows

along the river bank screened her camp on all sides.

About noon Hoistah stopped in this cove and by evening her camp was well in order, not to be suspected by the soldiers, so completely was she hidden behind the willows, the cottonwoods and the dunes.

At evening she gathered dried sticks from beneath two dead trees near her tepee and started a camp-fire in a bend of the dune, so that no one could see it from any direction. Here she cooked and ate some of the half-dried meat she had brought. Until daylight had completely died out Hoistah sat by her little camp-fire listening to Nature's voices. Her pony, securly hobbled, grazed near her, and ever and anon the raincrow called from the thickest of the nearby grove. By and by some little coyotes, left alone while their mother went

in search of food, began to run up and down the sandy banks along the river, loud in their frolicsome exercise; the moon, full and round, arose in the east, and the hoot of an owl in the dense forest across the river announced that the reign of night had begun. Then Hoistah tied her pony among the willows and entering her tepee closed it and slept soundly until dawn.

At dawn the quail's "bobb white" awoke her. The "tit-tit-tit-twig" of the scissor-tail bird, the lark's glad song and the discordant voice of the crow in the dead cottonwood tree on the river bank called her forth into a new day. She put the pony grazing again while she cooked her meat. The fatigue of her long journey had been great. And for two or three hours she rested before she mounted her pony again and rode on to the neighbourhood of the

main Cheyenne camp. There to her relief she saw the "pony soldiers" leaving. Back again she rode to her tepee, without a word to any one, and packing up again she came in to the Cheyenne camp just before night and placed her tepee there near to the main camp, but by itself. Here, just where woodland and prairie meet, alone but near her tribe, she established her new and comfortable, though somewhat lonely, home.

All the Cheyennes knew what troubles she had borne and were kind to her.

CHAPTER XIV

In Oklahoma

During the winter months Hoistah did not stay far from her own tepee. Cheyenne children brought sticks for her camp-fire; food and clothing were provided for her by the tribe, so that she lived comfortably. She was thankful, too, that the pale-faced people seldom came about.

When the sun shone warm and bright, as it did for days and days during the winter months, she would sit on the south side of her tepee, or in some other sheltered spot, and nod as she thought and dreamed of olden times. When Arapahoes or other neighbouring Indians came to visit her tribe she would attend the feasts, and always en-

joyed watching the dancing upon these occasions.

On winter evenings she would sit by her fire and tell the legends and traditions of her people to those who visited her; almost every day she talked of olden times in the Black Hills. But the sacred legends she never repeated except at night.

The early summer season was what Hoistah most enjoyed. At that time she could ride over the reservation at will and live much in the open. One day in early June she rode out over the prairie to the North Canadian River to be alone and think and dream of the past uninterrupted. Through the billowy sea of bluestem grass she rode until the shade of a cottonwood tree by the river's bank invited her to rest. Turning her pony loose to graze she spread her blanket in the shade and sat down for

a good quiet hour. At her side a sensitive rose bloomed, and for a time she toyed with this plant, touching its leaves first on this branch and then on that to see them wither temporarily. Just at her back some wild poppies in bloom seemed to signal to the other flowers as they stood on the wind-blown prairie; all around her the diminutive sun-flowers bowed gracefully to the flower people of the meadow, but constantly turned as Clyte of old to follow the sun-god in his daily journey. Yellow cone-flowers, stiff and unyielding, stood sentinel-like all around; here and there the morning asters displayed their dainty white umbrellas, and prairie primroses peeped out from the deep grass everywhere.

The warm south wind, the perfumes of the blossoming prairie, the rustling of the leaves of the nearby tree and the quietude

of this primitive place appealed to the aged Cheyenne woman to lie down and rest.

Lying quietly in the shade she looked up, and began unconsciously to watch some hawks that circled far up in the blue above. Soon she was only conscious of their silent circlings and could not distinguish one from the other; then in dreamland she again played as a little girl on the bank of the river in the far away but still beloved Black Hills. The sun moved on westward, but only the eye of the sun-flower followed him in his journey.

When Hoistah awoke the shade of the cottonwood had long since left her, though the prairie flowers still clustered near. Her pony was nowhere to be seen, and taking up her blanket she began to follow the dim trail, first picking up the rawhide thong she had used as a bridle, with which she would

have hobbled the pony but for a trick of failing memory that was coming on her. Down the mesa from the prairie into the river valley went the trail at last, and Hoistah, climbing down still followed. Soon she found a place where the pony had stood in a thicket a long time for relief from the annoying flies, but again the trail led on toward the river. Presently she met the pony returning from getting a drink at the river. Scolding her for "running away" and at the same time patting the beautiful spotted creature kindly, Hoistah mounted her pony and rode back again across the prairie to the edge of the woodland-home.

But again, when she dismounted. When released the pony kicked up her heels and ran far out over the prairie to join the herd. Hoistah said:

"You foolish pony! I have ridden you for ten and five summers; you should be an old, old pony, but you are more foolish now than any of your numerous descendants. You and I are old nevertheless and soon must pass on to another land—an unknown region. We shall not follow, now or then, the way of the pale-faced people, but the way of the true Cheyenne."

CHAPTER XV

With her own People

So Hoistah passed the summer riding about the reservation, visiting the feasts and the social dances and frequently sleeping among the wild prairie flowers; then winter came again.

This winter Hoistah, during the stormy days, never left her tepee, and seldom repeated now, the legends of her people; in fact, she seemed to have forgotten them. But she talked freely of the old life in the Black Hills.

By mid-winter she had gradually become too weak to walk about even in her own tepee, and some of her friends wanted to con-

sult a white physician at the Indian Agency for her, but she would not consent. The Cheyenne medicine man said frankly that he could not help her. "It is old age," said he; "she is going beyond."

Watchers stayed night and day at her tepee, and often, half awake and half asleep, she would talk of games and scenes as if she were a child playing again by the Cheyenne River. One stormy night she lay still a long, long time, and then the watchers saw her make the sign of the Cheyenne feebly as she murmured, "Dzĭ'tsĭstä's." ("Our own people.") What more she tried to say they could not understand. She was silent again for a long time, and they knew her life was ended.

The next day they brought her pony to the tepee and attached a travois to him. Hoistah's body, wrapped in a bright robe,

was placed therein, and friends accompanied her as her body was thus drawn up on a high mesa overlooking a deep canyon, where a grave, deep and wide, was dug. The agent of the national government had forbidden the burial scaffolds which had been the Cheyenne custom hitherto. Into this new grave Hoistah's body was lowered. The pony that had been so faithful during life was killed and placed beside her mistress to be of service to her in the spirit land. There were also dried herbs, plaits of sweet grass, and implements of the industries of her people, as well as foods of various kinds. Over her body were thrown her shawls and her heavy buffalo robe.

Having done all this the friends withdrew from the grave and sat apart. Every little while some one would leave the group with an offering and deposit it in the open pit,

addressing Hoistah as the token of love and respect was lowered.

When at last shadows were lengthening toward the east the oldest Cheyenne of all in the tribe arose and asked if every one had "made offerings" who wished to do so.

Receiving no reply he himself went forward and placed in the grave a beautiful blanket saying:

"True Cheyenne, enter the shadows of the unknown world in comfort, and know that we who remain behind are ready to serve your needs. May these offerings help you to pass with safety and comfort through the dangers of the long trail you are now to follow in the spirit land, and may you reach in safety the happy hunting grounds of your own people."

Then over the grave, now almost filled

with offerings, the friends piled a great heap of stones. Thus was Hoistah's body protected from the wild beasts of the plains. At sunset the tribe departed, leaving the dead alone, but trusting that her spirit should find its way through the unknown world to her own people.

By a lone tree on the mesa, overlooking the deep canyon in the Cheyenne country, is the sunken stone heap, marking the grave of Hoistah. The unwearied winds sweeping through the dried leaves of the tree sing a requiem in winter time. In summer the voices of nature sing their songs, and all around the flower people of the prairie smile and nod and beckon kindly above the resting place of Hoistah, the true Cheyenne—the Signal-Light-Woman.

Hoistah's life ended more than a genera-

tion ago, but her memory and the spirit of her unyielding nature, as well as her distrust of the way of the pale-faced people, still exist among the Cheyenne Indians.

THE END